

## NIST Technology Innovation Program — Frequently Asked Questions

### **Q. How much funding is available from TIP?**

TIP funding is determined by Congressional appropriations. Congress appropriated \$69.9 million for TIP in FY 2010. The actual amount available for funding new TIP awards is published in the Federal Register and at Grants.gov whenever a competition is announced. TIP appropriations are used to fund new competitively awarded high-risk, high-reward R&D projects, to pay for on-going TIP projects that were first awarded during prior years, for on-going projects first funded under the Advanced Technology Program, and for administrative costs.

### **Q. How are the “areas of critical national need” determined?**

“Areas of critical national need” are those that demand government attention because the magnitude of the problem is large and the societal challenges that need to be overcome are not being addressed. In determining which areas of critical national need will be addressed in a competition, NIST may solicit input from the TIP Advisory Board [http://www.nist.gov/tip/adv\\_brd/index.cfm](http://www.nist.gov/tip/adv_brd/index.cfm); other government agencies; government advisory bodies such as the National Research Council (NRC), the National Academy of Sciences (NAS), the National Academy of Engineering (NAE) and the Institute of Medicine (IOM) <http://www.nas.edu> and the public. NIST also may engage experts in scientific and technology policy to ensure that the areas of critical national need that will be considered are those that entail significant societal challenges that are not already being addressed by others and could be addressed through high-risk, high-reward research.

For each TIP competition, the formal announcement published in the *Federal Register* and on Grants.Gov [www.grants.gov] will include a description of the specific societal challenges within selected areas of critical national need that will be addressed in that competition.

### **Q. I have an idea for a future TIP competition. How can I share my ideas with TIP?**

TIP solicits topics for areas of critical national need that form the scope of TIP competitions from the public. TIP encourages interested parties to submit a “white paper” outlining an idea for a critical national need consistent with the TIP mission and award criteria. Instructions for preparing and submitting white papers are available on the TIP website at [http://www.nist.gov/tip/wp/upload/guide\\_for\\_white\\_papers.pdf](http://www.nist.gov/tip/wp/upload/guide_for_white_papers.pdf) and are announced in the *Federal Register*.

**Q. How can I apply for TIP funding?**

TIP funding opportunities are publicly announced in the Federal Register, at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), and on the TIP website. To receive notification of future TIP competitions, join the TIP email list by completing the electronic form at [http://tipmailing.nist.gov/forms/mailling\\_list.cfm](http://tipmailing.nist.gov/forms/mailling_list.cfm). Prospective applicants should fully review the applicable Federal Register Notice, the Federal Funding Opportunity notice at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov), the TIP Proposal Preparation Kit on the TIP website, and any associated documents, such as white papers that describe the competition scope. All necessary documents, or links to those documents, can be found on the TIP website.

**Q. May foreign-owned companies get TIP funding?**

In broad terms, to receive funding from TIP, a company must be incorporated in the United States, and do the majority of its business in the U.S. The company may be owned by a parent company incorporated in another country, but in that case, NIST must determine that the company's participation in TIP would be in the economic interest of the United States (for example leading to investments in the United States in research, development, and manufacturing and increased employment in the U.S.), and that the parent company is incorporated in a country which affords comparable opportunities to United States-owned companies and affords adequate and effective protection for the intellectual property rights of United States-owned companies. A more thorough description of these requirements is found in the TIP rule.

**Q. What is the difference between TIP and the old Advanced Technology Program (ATP)?**

The most important distinction is that TIP has a *significantly different mission*. Research projects funded by the ATP had a general requirement to demonstrate that they were “high risk”—that is, the research was technically challenging and success would require a major advance over the state of the art—and that the target technology had at least the potential to bring significant economic benefits to the nation through one means or another.

TIP also has the “high risk” criterion, but the program is more tightly focused on technologies that address “areas of critical national need,” a key phrase for understanding TIP. TIP is in the market for solutions to important societal challenges.

TIP also has somewhat different eligibility requirements, funding levels and cost-share requirements.

**Q. What are the differences in eligibility and funding between TIP and the ATP?**

**Eligibility—**

**Under the ATP**, funding could go to single, for-profit U.S. companies or to industry-led “joint ventures” of two or more for-profit companies that also could include nonprofit research institutions, universities or federal laboratories other than NIST. There were some special restrictions on the amount of funding that could go to a large company (defined as a member of the “Fortune 500”), and the lead partner in a joint venture had to be a company or a non-profit research institution, not a university or Federal lab. Intellectual property created as a result of the project had to be held by one or more for-profit companies.

**Under TIP**, funding can go to a single company project led by a small or medium-sized company (large companies are excluded) or to a joint venture, with the important differences that institutions of higher education can be the lead partner in the venture, and resulting intellectual property may reside with any member of the venture, including universities and nonprofits research institutions. Large companies may participate in a TIP joint venture as an unfunded partner.

**Funding—**

The **ATP** could fund single company projects for no more than \$2 million total over a period of no more than three years. Joint venture projects could be funded for no more than five years, but there was no limit to the size of the award other than the amount of available funds. TIP can fund single company projects for up to \$3 million over three years, and joint ventures for up to \$9 million over five years.

There are a few additional differences between the two programs, particularly related to the rules on matching funds. TIP will fund no more than 50 percent of total project costs, and its funds may be used only for so-called direct costs, not indirect costs (such as overhead), profits or management fees. No TIP funding may go to a large company.

**Q. What will happen to projects previously funded under the ATP?**

TIP is authorized to continue funding and managing projects that were begun by the ATP under the terms of the original ATP awards.

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